



# WISCONSIN FARM REPORTER

December 17, 2019 - Vol. 19, No. 23

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- Crop Progress Annual Review

*The Wisconsin Farm Reporter is compiled from data and reports released by the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).*

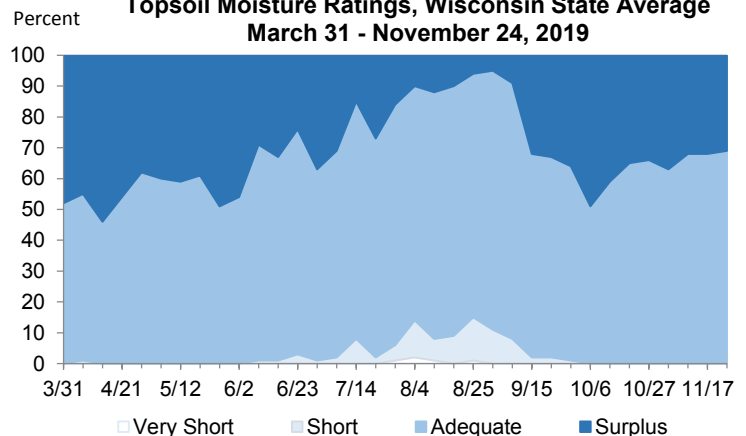
*All NASS data and reports are available free at [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov)*

Soils were heavily saturated as the 2019 planting season opened, with topsoil moisture rated at 48 percent surplus on March 31. Below normal temperatures and frequent rain events kept soils wet throughout the cropping season, causing significant delays to fieldwork. Overwintered crops were damaged by ice storms in January and February, followed by spring flooding and multiple freeze-thaw cycles in March, April and May. Late snow and cold soil conditions in April and May delayed planting significantly and suppressed crop emergence and pasture growth. Spring tillage was only 93 percent complete on June 16, 15 days behind the previous year. Planting dragged on past crop insurance cut off dates in late June with many acres of prevented plantings reported. Poor quantity and quality of hay and pasture kept forage supplies tight through the spring and summer. July brought heat and more rain, with west central and southwest parts of the state receiving more precipitation than elsewhere. Wet conditions hampered haying and spraying, and there was some severe weather damage to crops midmonth. Drier conditions during August let farmers catch up on spraying, make hay and harvest small grains. However, below-normal temperatures meant crop development remained one to two weeks behind average. Topsoil moistures were 15 percent short to very short and only 6 percent surplus on August 25, the driest rating for the season. Frequent rains resumed during September, with southern and eastern portions of the state receiving more rain than the west and north. Deep mud and high grain moistures delayed the start of fall fieldwork, and remained major problems throughout the rest of the year. The first frost held off until the week ending October 28, allowing late planted crops more time to mature. Only days later, temperatures plunged into the teens and a Halloween snowstorm dumped up to 8 inches of snow across southern Wisconsin. Below average temperatures in early November helped firm the ground, improving access to muddy fields but stalling fall tillage. Frequent snow and rain in November kept grain moistures unusually high, prompting some farmers to delay harvest even further. Delays to the harvest in turn delayed or prevented fall tillage, plantings and manure spreading. On November 24, fall tillage was only 39 percent complete, compared to 67 percent in 2018. This was the slowest fall tillage progress in the past 40 years of Crop Progress data.

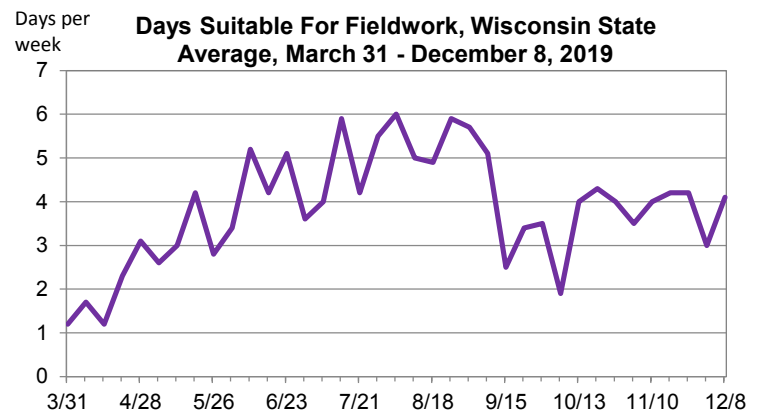
The average temperature for June through September was 65.6 degrees, compared with 66.6 degrees in 2018 and a normal of 64.9 degrees. July and September temperatures averaged 2.1 and 3.3 degrees above normal, respectively. The remaining months of the growing season ranged from 1.2 to 3.6 degrees below normal.

The statewide precipitation total for April through September was 29.09 inches, compared to 27.35 inches the previous year and a normal of 22.43 inches. September was the month with the largest departure from normal at 3.30 inches above normal. District precipitation totals for April through September ranged from 26.97 inches to 34.43 inches; by contrast, district totals ranged from 21.81 to 36.66 inches in 2018.

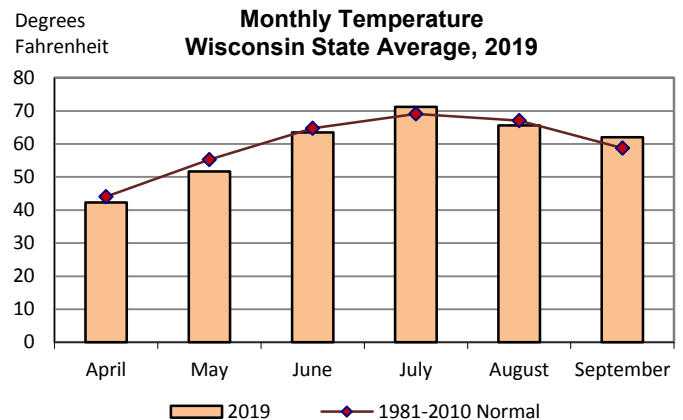
**Topsoil Moisture Ratings, Wisconsin State Average  
March 31 - November 24, 2019**



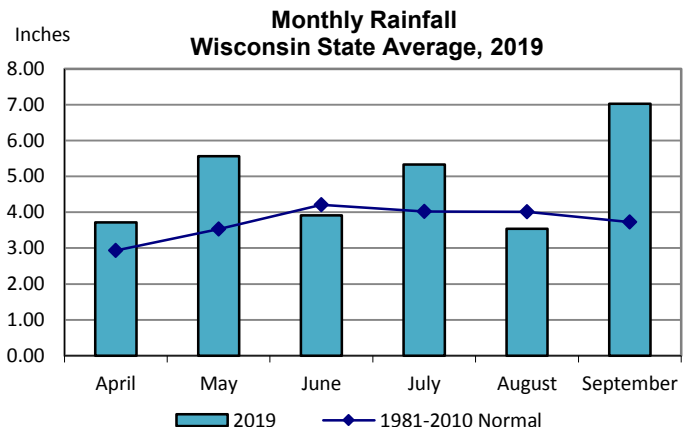
**Days Suitable For Fieldwork, Wisconsin State  
Average, March 31 - December 8, 2019**



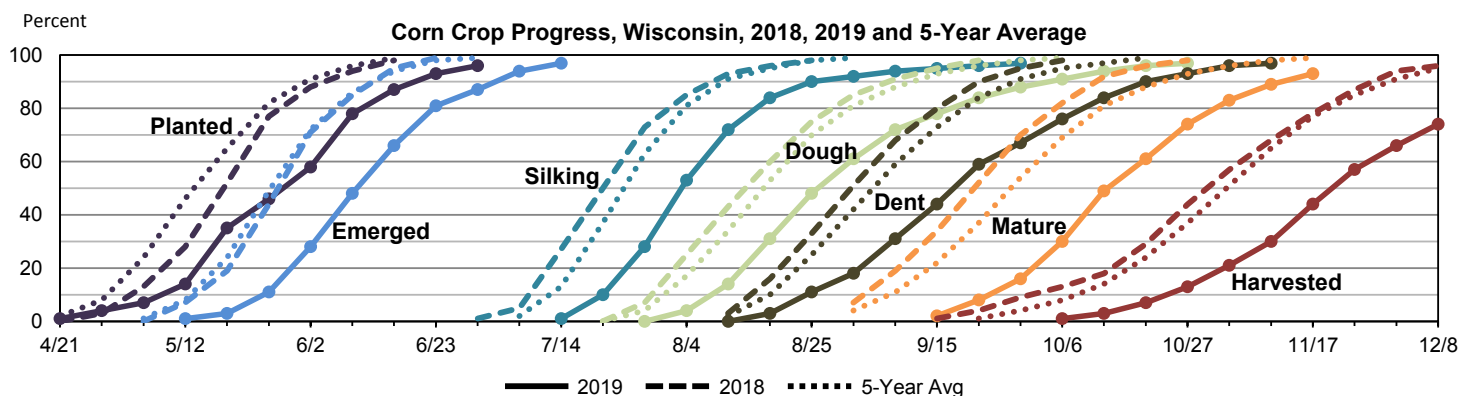
**Monthly Temperature  
Wisconsin State Average, 2019**



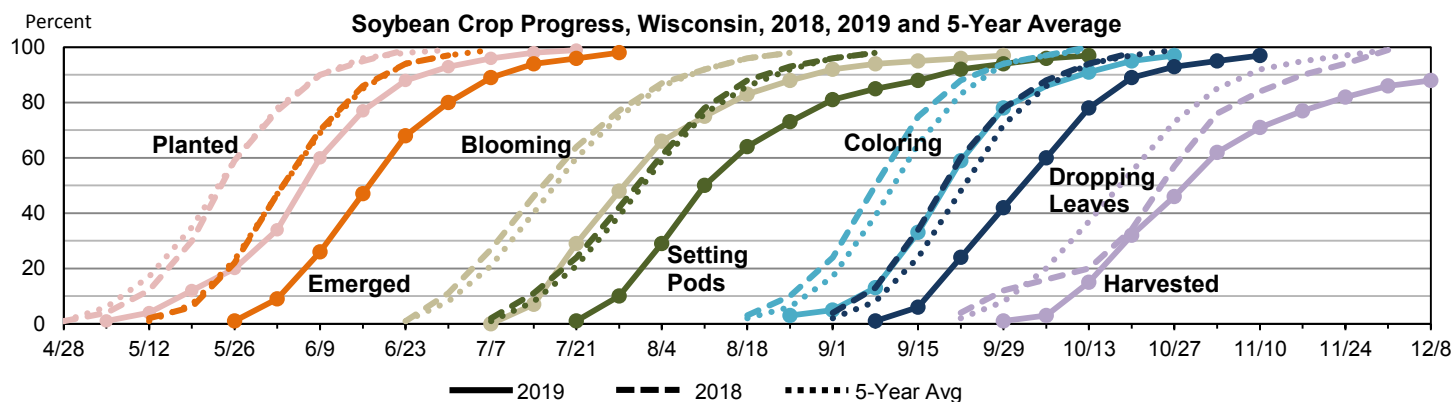
**Monthly Rainfall  
Wisconsin State Average, 2019**



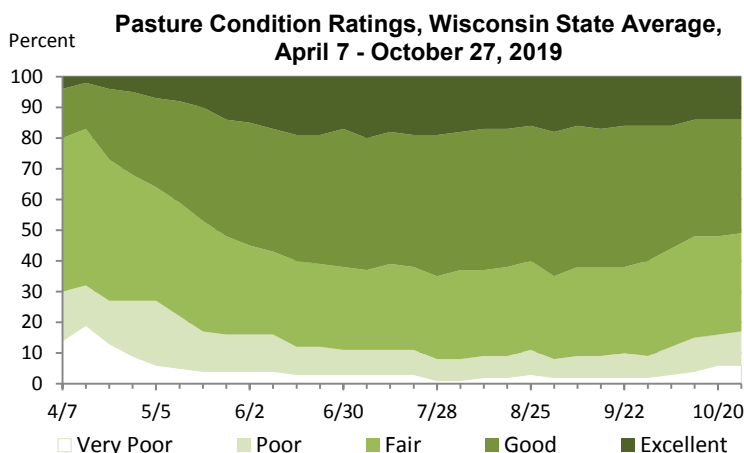
Though **corn** planting started near the 5-year average in 2019, wet, cold soils kept progress significantly slower than usual. Corn planting reached 96 percent complete on June 30, 18 days behind the previous year and three weeks behind the average. Many acres intended for corn were reportedly prevented or shifted to other crops. Some livestock producers continued planting corn intended for silage into July. Corn maturity lagged one to three weeks behind the average throughout the season. Corn condition averaged 62 percent good to excellent for the season, compared to 79 percent good to excellent in the previous year. Corn condition peaked at 69 percent good to excellent near the end of a warm and wet September. Corn silage chopping started about a week behind the average, but ended over three weeks later than average due to very wet conditions. Tight feed supplies reportedly caused some livestock producers to greenchop corn for feed before optimal maturity and plant moisture were reached. Combining corn for grain didn't begin until October, and was only 57 percent complete by November 24. This was 21 days behind 2018, 18 days behind the average and the second slowest harvest pace for corn in the past 40 years of Crop Progress records. Corn harvested for grain was 74 percent complete on December 8, with grain moisture still at 23 percent.



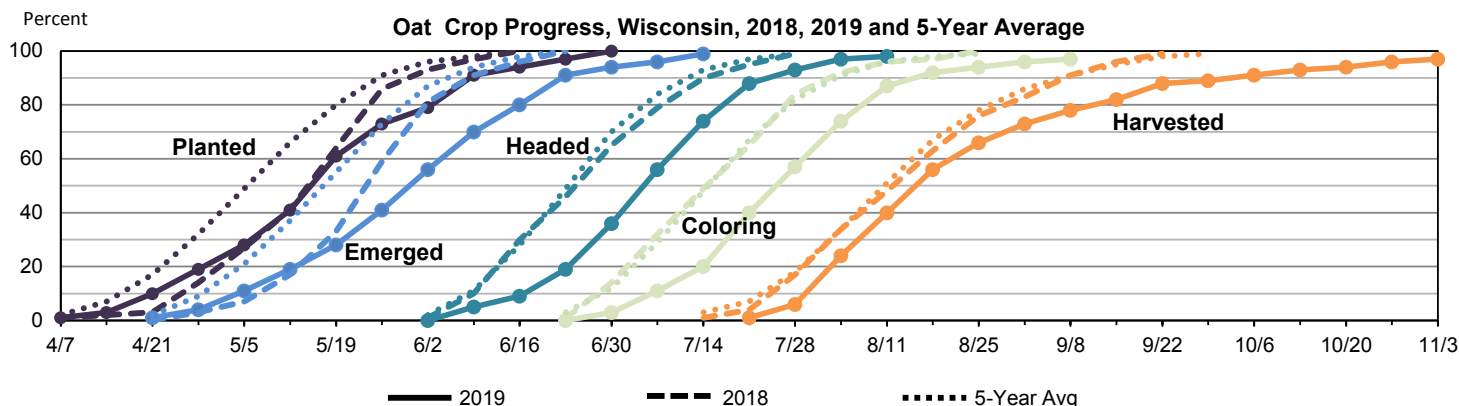
**Soybean** planting started slightly behind the 5-year average, with 1 percent planted on May 5. Poor field conditions, delays to corn planting and fields being switched from corn to soybeans meant soybean planting didn't wrap up until after mid-July, almost a month behind average. The soybean bloom was similarly behind. Soybeans condition averaged 66 percent good to excellent for the season, compared to 78 percent the previous year. A warm and rainy September helped soybean maturity catch up slightly, with the coloring and dropping leaves phases running only two weeks behind average. The late frost gave soybeans extra time to mature. However, wet conditions and early snows in October and November hampered combining and prevented some fields from being harvested at all. On November 24, 82 percent of soybeans were harvested, well below 94 percent in 2018 and an average of 97 percent. This was the second slowest soybean harvest in the past 40 years of Crop Progress records. Soybeans reached 88 percent harvested on December 8.



**Pasture** condition bottomed out at 17 percent good to excellent on the week ending April 14 following a cold snap and a major blizzard. Persistent mud and standing water meant pasture condition never made it above 65 percent good to excellent during the season. On average, 57 percent of pastures were in good to excellent condition from May through October, compared to 70 percent in 2018. The lack of pasture quality put additional pressure on tight feed and hay supplies.

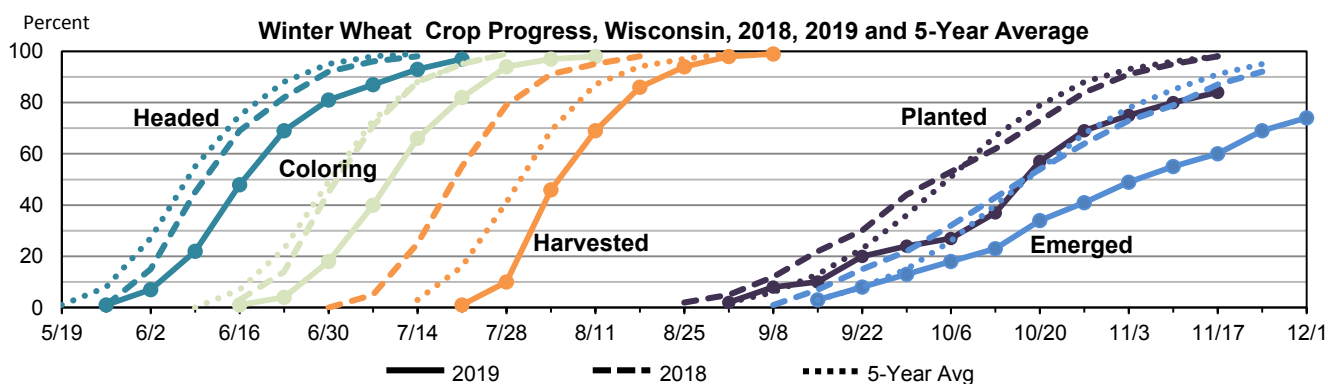


**Oats** planting started this season off in line with the previous year and the 5-year average. Rain, snow, mud, and below normal temperatures in April and May slowed planting progress somewhat and emergence even more. Overall, oats maturity ran one to two weeks behind average throughout the season. Oats condition averaged 70 percent good to excellent, compared to 88 percent the previous year. Dry weather in August allowed for a good start to the oats harvest. However, overlap with corn and soybean harvest, combined with heavy rains in September, delayed the end of the harvest until late October, over a month behind average.

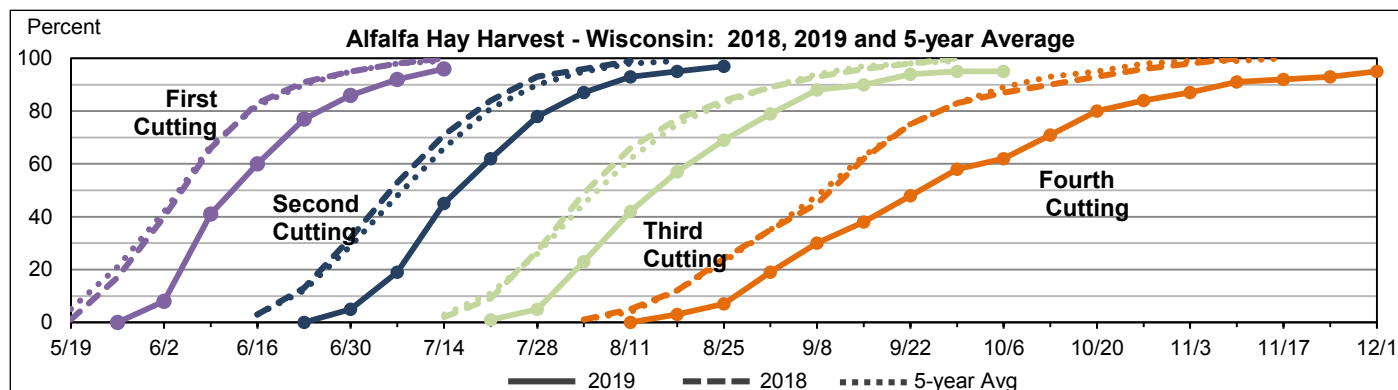


Widespread winterkill meant **winter wheat** started 2019 off in poor condition. Cold, wet conditions slowed development and meant less than 50 percent of the winter wheat crop was in good to excellent condition throughout the spring. Warmer weather in July did help improve wheat condition, peaking at 64 percent good to excellent on August 4. Harvest started 12 days behind normal, but ended less than one week behind thanks to drier conditions in August.

Winter wheat planting was significantly delayed by this year's very late soybean harvest, and further prevented in some areas when the ground froze in early November. By late November, winter wheat planting and emergence were both over 3 weeks behind the five year average. Condition averaged 53 percent good to excellent for the fall season, compared to 78 percent in 2018.



As of May 19, winter freeze damage to **alfalfa** was rated 25 percent severe, 18 percent moderate and 17 percent light. There was reportedly no damage to the remaining 40 percent of alfalfa, less than half of the 82 percent undamaged in the previous year. Winterkill damage was particularly bad in the North Central and Northwestern Districts, which reported 77 percent and 66 percent severe damage, respectively. Hay was slow to break dormancy with wet, cold spring conditions. Many reporters noted spring seeding of alfalfa to replace winterkilled stands, though wet conditions hampered planting and emergence. Tight feed supplies forced farmers to start their first cutting of hay before optimal maturity. All four cuttings of hay ran about two weeks behind the average this season. Though some hay was baled during dry weather in August, much of the hay crop was reportedly chopped and stored as haylage due to frequent rains. An early onset of cold weather combined with some unusually late fourth crop cuttings left some reporters concerned for hay stands' ability to overwinter. All hay condition was 49 percent good to excellent on average, compared to 80 percent good to excellent in 2018.



**MONTHLY TEMPERATURES: 2019 GROWING SEASON AND NORMAL<sup>1</sup>, WISCONSIN DISTRICTS AND STATE AVERAGE**

District	April		May		June		July		August		September	
	2019	Normal	2019	Normal	2019	Normal	2019	Normal	2019	Normal	2019	Normal
	<i>(degrees Fahrenheit)</i>											
NW	40.3	42.4	49.8	54.1	62.2	63.2	69.7	68.0	64.5	65.9	59.7	57.1
NC	39.1	41.6	49.2	53.4	61.3	62.5	68.7	66.8	62.9	64.9	59.1	56.4
NE	39.6	42.0	49.6	53.4	61.3	62.9	69.0	67.2	62.9	65.4	59.4	57.0
WC	43.9	45.7	53.3	56.8	65.4	66.2	72.4	70.6	67.3	68.3	63.8	59.7
C	43.5	45.2	53.0	56.3	64.6	65.7	72.4	69.9	66.4	67.8	62.7	59.4
EC	42.9	44.1	51.8	54.8	63.3	64.8	71.7	69.4	66.8	67.8	63.0	59.8
SW	46.3	46.9	55.1	57.7	66.4	67.3	74.1	71.4	67.7	69.3	65.3	61.1
SC	45.9	46.8	54.6	57.7	66.0	67.4	74.4	71.5	68.1	69.4	65.3	61.3
SE	45.7	46.1	54.0	56.6	64.4	66.6	73.8	71.2	68.5	69.6	65.4	61.7
STATE	42.3	44.0	51.7	55.3	63.5	64.7	71.2	69.1	65.6	67.1	62.0	58.7

<sup>1</sup> Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1981-2010.Source: WI State Climatologist <http://www.aos.wisc.edu/~sco/clim-watch/index.html>**MONTHLY RAINFALL: 2019 GROWING SEASON AND NORMAL<sup>1</sup>, WISCONSIN DISTRICTS AND STATE AVERAGE**

District	April		May		June		July		August		September	
	2019	Normal	2019	Normal	2019	Normal	2019	Normal	2019	Normal	2019	Normal
	<i>(inches)</i>											
NW	3.51	2.65	5.58	3.36	3.29	4.09	4.93	4.08	3.19	4.01	6.47	3.97
NC	4.01	2.62	5.35	3.39	3.52	4.04	5.25	3.95	3.34	3.81	6.30	4.01
NE	4.20	2.57	5.49	3.23	3.25	3.77	5.22	3.68	3.29	3.46	7.15	3.61
WC	3.64	3.13	6.25	3.78	4.54	4.44	6.23	4.25	3.54	4.49	6.34	3.87
C	3.87	3.00	5.23	3.60	4.71	4.35	5.94	4.04	3.29	4.03	6.38	3.61
EC	3.73	2.86	4.59	3.26	4.06	3.87	4.27	3.67	4.38	3.59	6.97	3.38
SW	3.74	3.56	5.83	4.02	4.42	4.83	6.77	4.44	3.28	4.52	10.39	3.46
SC	3.15	3.37	5.90	3.71	4.24	4.63	4.52	4.09	4.49	4.18	7.47	3.50
SE	3.19	3.42	5.86	3.61	4.11	4.04	4.05	3.78	4.11	4.02	7.24	3.42
STATE	3.72	2.93	5.56	3.53	3.91	4.21	5.33	4.02	3.54	4.01	7.03	3.73

<sup>1</sup> Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1981-2010.Source: WI State Climatologist <http://www.aos.wisc.edu/~sco/clim-watch/index.html>**COMPARATIVE TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION DATA, WISCONSIN DISTRICTS AND STATE AVERAGE**

District	Average Temperature						Total Precipitation					
	June - September						April - September					
	Normal <sup>1</sup>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Normal <sup>1</sup>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	<i>(degrees Fahrenheit)</i>						<i>(inches)</i>					
NW	63.6	64.9	65.3	63.4	65.0	64.0	22.16	24.33	26.94	25.66	23.23	26.97
NC	62.7	63.5	64.5	62.7	64.3	63.0	21.82	21.82	27.23	26.21	22.35	27.77
NE	63.1	64.0	65.2	63.3	64.6	63.2	20.32	22.07	23.06	26.59	21.81	28.60
WC	66.2	67.4	68.3	66.8	68.3	67.2	23.96	28.02	31.28	26.74	26.81	30.54
C	65.7	66.8	68.1	66.3	67.8	66.5	22.63	24.54	26.61	24.46	31.90	29.42
EC	65.5	66.1	67.9	66.2	67.2	66.2	20.63	21.70	22.37	24.40	27.62	28.00
SW	67.3	67.9	69.3	67.6	69.0	68.4	24.83	22.75	33.15	26.20	36.53	34.43
SC	67.4	67.6	69.7	67.6	68.8	68.5	23.48	25.58	26.95	26.97	36.66	29.77
SE	67.3	67.0	69.8	67.5	68.5	68.0	22.29	23.14	21.19	25.38	30.74	28.56
STATE	64.9	65.8	67.0	65.2	66.6	65.6	22.43	23.80	27.02	25.93	27.35	29.09

<sup>1</sup> Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1981-2010.Source: WI State Climatologist <http://www.aos.wisc.edu/~sco/clim-watch/index.html>

The Wisconsin Farm Reporter has been made possible through the cooperative efforts of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection.

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